

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method sorts out defect-free elements blanked out of a metal sheet for a belt for use in a continuously variable transmission. Each of the elements has a body and a head joined to the body with a pair of recesses defined therebetween. The elements are stacked in a transverse direction thereof into an annular form and bundled together by an assembly of stacked endless metal rings inserted in the recesses into a belt for use in a continuously variable transmission. The elements are inserted into a passage having a predetermined width to sort out and deliver those elements which have passed through the passage to a feed path. Respective images of the elements which have been delivered to the feed path are analyzed while in the feed path to compare the images with a reference element image. Elements which have entrapped foreign matter, outer profile deformations, and defects are rejected from the feed path, and other elements are fed through the feed path. The fed elements are stacked and arrayed in a transverse direction thereof downstream of the feed path. The arrayed elements are passed through gages having a shape complementary to a required shape for the recesses of the elements, and those elements which have passed through the gage are sorted out as defect-free elements.